



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI MAN INDICTED FOR DEFRAUDING SPRINGFIELD AUTO DEALERSHIP

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Mississippi man was indicted by a federal grand jury today for defrauding a Springfield, Mo., business.

Joseph C. Holder, 59, of Biloxi, Miss., was charged in a four-count indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Springfield.

The federal indictment alleges that **Holder** devised a scheme to defraud Team Motorsports, a pre-owned luxury automobile dealership located in Springfield, from February 2000 through July 2001.

During the course of the scheme to defraud Team Motorsports, **Holder** was employed by the company to locate and purchase vehicles on behalf of the business. In doing business with **Holder**, Team Motorsports often would send him money to either place deposits on vehicles or purchase vehicles.

The indictment alleges that **Holder** contacted Team Motorsports regarding the potential purchase of a 1993 600 SL Mercedes-Benz for \$38,000 in Ocean Springs, Miss., in March or April 2000. It was arranged that **Holder** would either sell the Mercedes in Mississippi or send the Mercedes to Team Motorsports. However, **Holder** explained to Team Motorsports that the seller of the vehicle would not accept an out-of-state check and convinced Team Motorsports' owner to instead send a check made out in **Holder's** name that could later be converted to a cashier's check or bank check to purchase the vehicle.

After the purchase of the vehicle, Team Motorsports' owner asked that **Holder** fax a copy of the title so that he could provide it to the company's bank, which financed the purchase on a floor-plan line of credit. Subsequently, **Holder** faxed the owner a copy of a Louisiana title for the

Mercedes. The fax was sent from Gautier, Miss., to Springfield.

After the fax was completed, **Holder** continued to communicate with the owner of Team Motorsports via telephone on several occasions between May 11, 2000, and July 2001. During these conversations, the company's owner inquired as to why he had not received the original copy of the vehicle's title and **Holder** explained that there were delays in converting the Louisiana vehicle title to a Mississippi title. The indictment also alleges that **Holder** indicated on several occasions that he had found a buyer for the vehicle.

In reality, the indictment alleges, **Holder** never paid the original owner of the Mercedes any money.

In addition, **Holder** did not transfer deposits made toward other vehicles to their respective dealerships as he agreed he would do.

Count One of the federal indictment alleges that **Holder**, for the purpose of executing the scheme, caused a check drawn on the account of Team Motorsports in the amount of \$38,000 to be made out in his name and mailed to him from Springfield to Mississippi.

Count Two of the federal indictment alleges that **Holder**, for the purpose of executing the scheme, committed wire fraud when he caused a copy of a Louisiana title for a 1993 600 SL Mercedes-Benz to be transferred electronically over the telephone from Mississippi to Springfield on May 11, 2000.

Count Three of the federal indictment alleges that **Holder**, for the purpose of executing the scheme, committed wire fraud when he caused copies of four purchase orders for two Mercedes Benz CLK55's and two Mercedes-Benz CL55's to be transferred electronically over the telephone from Mississippi to Springfield on May 31, 2000.

Count Four of the federal indictment alleges that **Holder**, for the purpose of executing the scheme, committed wire fraud when he caused a proposed purchase agreement for a 1993 600 SL Mercedes-Benz to be transferred electronically over the telephone from Mississippi to Springfield on June 30, 2000.

Graves cautioned that the charges contained in the indictment are simply accusations and not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charges must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Douglas C. Bunch. The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow